Week of July 30, 2012 **Contact us** **Subscribe** **Previous issues**

Green Power

BMW Partners with Green Mountain Energy Company to Support Clean Energy

Launches program for BMW ActiveE drivers to purchase renewable energy certificates

BMW and Green Mountain Energy Company today announced their partnership to offer drivers of the BMW ActiveE the choice to support renewable energy for their cars. The ActiveE drivers, known as "Electronauts," now have the opportunity to purchase renewable energy certificates (RECs) from Green Mountain to cover the estimated electricity that will be used to charge their electric vehicles (EVs). Read more. *Source: MarketWatch, 7/30/12*

Visit U.S. DOE EERE Green Power Network for more information.

Renewable Energy Technologies

NREL Map shows potential for different renewable energy systems

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory has developed an interactive map that shows the renewable energy technical potential for a chosen geographical area. As defined in the report, U.S. Renewable Energy Technical Potentials: A GIS-Based Analysis (PDF 2.7 MB) renewable energy technical potential represents the achievable energy generation of a particular technology given system performance, topographic limitations, environmental, and land-use constraints. Read more. *Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 7/30/12*

Interstate Turbine Advisory Council Releases Unified List of Small Wind Turbines

Collaborative Group of Public Clean Energy Programs Identifies Small Wind Turbines Eligible for Participation in State Incentive Programs

On May 1st, the Interstate Turbine Advisory Council (ITAC), a project of the Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA), released the first version of its Unified List of small wind turbines (turbines with a rotor swept area less than 200 square meters) eligible for state incentive program funding. The Unified List provides a collaborative and common list of turbines, a critical step in developing a robust distributed wind market. The List will be used by ITAC-member clean energy programs across the United States, who have pooled resources to efficiently review and evaluate turbines. Read more. *Source: Interstate Renewable Energy Council, 7/30/12*

Western to Purchase Renewable Energy Certificates for Federal Agencies

Western Area Power Administration is issuing a request for proposals for renewable energy certificates, or RECs, for Federal agencies.

RECs represent the environmental attributes of energy generated by renewable resources such as solar, wind, biomass or landfill gas, physically delivered into the electric grid.

Western seeks firm, fixed, per-MWh unit price offers beginning Sept. 2012. Read more. *Source: Western Area Power Administration, 7/27/12*

Solar Tax Breaks Boost US Coffers, Analysis Says

It's the backbone of solar energy development in the United States – the investment tax credit, implemented under George W. Bush as part of the 2005 Energy Policy Act, then later modified and extended through 2016. But as much as we all like to see more solar power going in, such a hefty tax break – 30 percent of the cost of a system, with no maximum credit – must really end up costing the Treasury and adding to the country's budget deficit, right? Read more. *Source: Earth Techling, 7/22/12*

SMUD leads the nation in new solar power home construction

Solar-powered, super energy-efficient new homes benefit community in many ways

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) is now the leading utility in the nation in terms of new homes that have solar panels installed during construction. The SMUD SolarSmart Homes program commenced in 2006 and, despite the intervening housing downturn, SMUD has worked with 18 local, regional and national homebuilders to construct more than 1,000 of these energy-producing and energy-saving homes in its service territory. SolarSmart Homes is a SMUD program that

combines solar power and advanced energy efficiency measures in new home design and construction. Read more. *Source: Sacramento Municipal Utility District, 7/17/12*

AWEA release annual small wind report

The 2011 Small Wind Report is now posted online. This year's report was expanded from previous small wind annual reports by including exemplary case studies, programs, markets and business models. The American Wind Energy Association welcomes your thoughts on the report and suggestions about how it might be improved next year.

If you would like a hard copy, please send your surface mail address. *Source: American Wind Energy Association, 6/28/12*

Learn more about renewable resources.

Outreach, Education, Reports & Studies

SunShot Initiative Offers Solar Development Tools

To assist individuals and communities increase their use of solar power, DOE's SunShot Initiative has developed several resources:

- **Solar Site Survey Toolkit** — After a couple outings, a principal technologist at Sandia National Laboratories saw a need for a travel kit that would have the necessary tools to make the task of site surveys more manageable and safer. They have had great success using the kit in the field already.
- **Study Guide for Photovoltaic System Installers and Sample Examination Questions** — This study guide presents some of the basic cognitive material that individuals who install and maintain PV systems should understand. This information is intended primarily as a study guide to help better prepare for the NABCEP PV installer examination but does not provide all of the information needed for completing the certification examination.
- **Solar Powering Your Community: A Guide for Local Governments** — The U.S. Department of Energy developed this comprehensive resource to assist local governments and stakeholders in building sustainable local solar markets. This second edition of the guide was updated to include new market developments and innovations for advancing local solar markets that have emerged since the first edition was released in 2009.
- **Meetings and Workshops** — Upcoming solar meetings and workshops supported by the DOE SunShot Initiative are listed in this section. Proceedings, presentations, and other resources from past workshops and meetings are also available. These conferences provide opportunities for solar program staff, national laboratory teams, and industry partners to discuss issues that can benefit the entire solar industry.

Source: DOE SunShot Initiative, 7/30/12

Learn 'How to Talk to a Wind Skeptic'

The American Wind Energy Association Utility Working Group (AUWG) July 26 webinar, "How to Talk to a Wind Skeptic," is now available online. Presentations include top techniques for confronting hostile audiences, and a guided tour of AWEA's newly revised and expanded set of flashcards, *The Truth About Wind Power*, Second Edition, which covers 16 top "urban legends" about wind power.

AWEA member utilities are encouraged to invite their project development and communications personnel involved in wind power projects to attend this webinar.

Learn how to address the topics which AWEA utility members have indicated are of most concern to them when dealing with members of the media, the public and opposition groups:

- Wind project siting & wildlife issues
- Land use and property values
- Wind energy's cost & reliability
- Health & safety concerns

You will also hear the top recommendations of experts in crisis communications and social media, for when your project or company faces unwarranted attacks. You may listen to the webinar free of charge, but registration is required. *Source: American Wind Energy Association Utility Working Group, 7/27/12*

NREL report explores impact of ARRA grant expiration

Congress established the Treasury grant program under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to bring tax equity investors back into the market with an offer of cash payment in lieu of a production and investment tax credit. *Section 1603 Treasury Grant Expiration: Industry Insight on Financing and Market Implications*, a study from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, addresses the likely project financing and market impacts from the expiration of the program. Read more. *Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 7/23/12*

Aligning Green Power Partners with New Renewable Energy Projects

On Tuesday, July 17, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Green Power Partnership (GPP) hosted a webinar on "Aligning Green Power Partners with New Renewable Energy Projects". The webinar provided a forum for attendees to learn about new, not-yet-built renewable energy projects that may align with their energy, environmental, and financial objectives. Read more. *Source: EPA Green Power Partnership, 7/17/12*

Freeing the Grid 2.0: Award-Winning Renewable Energy Policy Guide Goes Digital

Today Vote Solar and the Interstate Renewable Energy Council, Inc. (IREC) launched an interactive web version of Freeing the Grid, a policy guide that grades all 50

states on two key programs: net metering and interconnection procedures. Together these policies empower American energy consumers to use rooftop solar and other small-scale renewables to meet their own electricity needs.

Now in its sixth year of production, Freeing the Grid is intended to help state policymakers, regulators, advocates and industry stakeholders improve net metering and interconnection rules. The new web version is designed to make it easier to access, understand and share best practices and state progress on these foundational renewable energy policies. Read more. *Source: Interstate Renewable Energy Council, 7/16/12*

New Database Makes Costs of Energy Technologies More Transparent

As part of the Energy Department's Open Energy Information platform (Open EI) and its continued commitment to open and transparent energy data, the Department released today a new public database featuring cost and performance estimates for electric generation, advanced vehicle, and renewable fuel technologies. The Transparent Cost Database (TCDB) provides technology cost estimates for companies, utilities, policy makers, consumers, and academics, and can be used to benchmark company costs, model energy scenarios, and inform research and development decisions. The database makes it much easier to view the range of estimates for what energy technologies, such as a utility-scale wind farm, rooftop solar installation, biofuel production plant, or an electric vehicle, might cost today or in the future. Read more. *Source: DOE EERE Progress Alerts, 7/16/12*

Wind Powering America 11th Annual All-States Summit Proceedings

Approximately 100 members of Wind Powering America's network attended the 11th Annual All-States Summit on June 7 at the Georgia Tech Research Institute Conference Center in Atlanta, with an additional 53 attending via webinar. The Summit, which follows the American Wind Energy Association's (AWEA's) annual WINDPOWER Conference and Exhibition, provides state Wind Working Groups, state energy officials, Energy Department and National Laboratory representatives, and professional and institutional partners an opportunity to review successes, opportunities, and challenges for wind energy and plan future collaboration. Read more. *Source: Wind Powering America, 7/5/12*

Why Green Power Matters: How RECs impact project development and achieve sustainability goals

Companies, governments, and citizens nationwide have made the decision to support green power by purchasing Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs). In fact, these voluntary purchases of green power are projected to exceed 133 million MWh by the year 2020, or enough renewable electricity for over 11 million homes. However, despite their decade-plus use in corporate sustainability efforts, branding, and financing new projects, RECs still encounter basic background questions.

View the webinar and hear from industry experts Blaine Collison, Director of the EPA's Green Power Partnership, Bill Eddie, President of OneEnergy Renewables, and Kathy Loftus, Global Leader of Sustainable Engineering and Energy Management of Whole Foods, as they describe what RECs are, who uses them, and how RECs help build more renewable generation. If your company is considering supporting renewable energy, this webinar is one of the easiest ways to quickly understand how RECs can help you meet your green power needs. Read more. *Source: Renewable Energy Marketing Association, 6/27/12*

Renewable Electricity Futures Study

A report published by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), the Renewable Electricity Futures Study (RE Futures), is an initial investigation of the extent to which renewable energy supply can meet the electricity demands of the continental United States over the next several decades. This study explores the implications and challenges of very high renewable electricity generation levels—from 30% up to 90%, focusing on 80%, of all U.S. electricity generation from renewable technologies—in 2050. At such high levels of renewable electricity generation, the unique characteristics of some renewable resources, specifically geographical distribution and variability and uncertainty in output, pose challenges to the operability of the nation's electric system. Read more. *Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 6/27/12*

Meeting Renewable Energy Targets in the West at Least Cost: The Integration Challege

The Western Governors' Association commissioned a report to explore ways to reduce costs to the region's electricity consumers for integrating wind and solar, identify barriers to adopting these measures and recommend possible state actions.

Prepared by Regulatory Assistance Project for Western Governors' Association. The preparation of this report was financed in part by funds provided by The Energy Foundation. The U.S. Department of Energy Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability supported the participation of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

Download the Executive Summary or the full report. *Source: Western Governors Association, 6/11/12*

Learn more about education and outreach activities.

News from Washington

Agriculture and Energy Departments Announce New Investments to Drive Innovations in Biofuels and Biobased Products

As part of the Obama Administration's all-of-the-above strategy to enhance U.S. energy security, reduce America's reliance on imported oil, and leverage our

domestic energy supply, while also supporting rural economies, the U.S. Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Energy today announced a $41 million investment in 13 projects that will drive more efficient biofuels production and feedstock improvements. Read more. *Source: DOE EERE Progress Alerts, 7/25/12*

Energy Department Breaks Ground on Texas Wind Turbine Test Facility

As part of President Obama's all-of-the-above energy strategy that develops every available source of American energy, the Energy Department joined with Texas Tech University and Sandia National Laboratories to break ground on a new state-of-the-art wind turbine test facility in Lubbock, Texas. The Scaled Wind Farm Technology (SWIFT) facility will be the first public facility of its kind in the world to use multiple wind turbines to measure how wind turbine wakes interact with one another in a wind farm. Scheduled to begin operation later this year, the facility will help wind turbine designers and manufacturers continue to drive down the cost of wind energy by reducing the aerodynamic losses of wind energy plants, enhancing energy capture, and mitigating turbine damage. Read more. *Source: DOE EERE Progress Alerts, 7/17/12*

Obama Administration Announces New Investments to Advance Biofuels Industry and Enhance America's Energy Security

As part of the Obama Administration's commitment to deploying every available source of American energy and reducing our reliance on imported oil, U.S. Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and Secretary of Energy Steven Chu announced new funding available to pursue new innovations in biofuels technologies, increase production of U.S. biofuels, and strengthen American energy security. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Navy and Department of Energy are announcing $30 million in federal funding to match private investments in commercial-scale advanced drop-in biofuels. The Energy Department is also announcing a total of $32 million in new investments for earlier stage research that will continue to drive technological breakthroughs and additional cost reductions in the industry. Read more. *Source: DOE EERE Progress Alerts, 7/2/12*

Energy Department Announces Draft Guide for Large-Scale Renewable Energy Projects Available for Public Comment

The Energy Department today announced the publication of the draft Federal Renewable Energy Guide: Developing Large-Scale Renewable Energy Projects at Federal Facilities Using Private Capital in the Federal Register for industry and agency comment. This Guide provides a project development framework to help federal agencies, private developers, and financiers coordinate on large-scale renewable energy projects that will help achieve federal renewable energy goals. The Guide underscores the comprehensive efforts by the Energy Department to increase the deployment of clean, renewable energy that diversifies our nation's energy portfolio and boosts our energy security. Read more. Source: *DOE EERE Progress Alerts, 6/22/12*

Learn more about national activities.

State Activities, Marketing & Market Research

Geothermal energy in New Mexico

"We need base-load, dispatchable resources that are clean and renewable to balance out electricity from more abundant, but intermittent resources like solar power and wind energy."

PNM included 10 megawatts of geothermal-generated electricity in its 2013 renewable energy procurement plan, submitted to the Public Regulation Commission on April 30.

If approved by the PRC, the utility would sign a 20-year power purchase agreement with Cyrq Energy Inc., which is investing $100 million to construct the "Lightning Dock" geothermal electric plant near Lordsburg. The plant, expected to come on line in January 2014, is the first utility-scale geothermal project under construction in New Mexico.

Including geothermal in PNM's energy mix is important because it provides "base-load energy," offering a steady electric supply 24/7. That helps offset the intermittent nature of solar and wind power, which shut down when the sun doesn't shine or the wind energy doesn't blow, said Gerard Ortiz, PNM's executive director of retail regulatory services.

"It will produce energy pretty much around the clock," Ortiz said.

Including geothermal in PNM's renewable portfolio helps the company meet the PRC's "diversity requirement," which calls for the state's public utilities to derive at least 20 percent of their renewable energy from solar, 20 percent from wind power, 1.5 percent from customer-owned generation such as rooftop solar photovoltaic systems, and 10 percent from "other sources," such as geothermal or biomass.

PRC Commissioner Jason Marks said diversity is critical for the smooth integration of renewables on the grid.

"We need base-load, dispatchable resources that are clean and renewable to balance out electricity from more abundant, but intermittent resources like solar power and wind energy," Marks said. *Source: Albuquerque Journal, 7/2/12*

The Cost of Value: PV and Property Taxes

This paper, presented at the World Renewable Energy Forum in May, explores state property valuation and tax treatment of photovoltaics in 15 states. The research uncovers significant variations in how PV systems are addressed in explicity state policies, numerous gaps where methodologies are now well-defined, and a variety of genera policy issues that merit attention in all states. Download the report. *Source: Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency, 6/20/12*

Bohr, Baby, Bohr! German Policies Support Enhanced Geothermal Drilling

Germany may have found the secret sauce that encourages new geothermal projects: policies that directly support drilling and financing the power plant—by lowering investor risks.

Germany's track record with geothermal electricity has been far less dynamic than its impressive history with wind and PV. Only 7.5 megawatts of geothermal electricity have been installed to date [1], compared to over 7,000 megawatts of PV installed in 2010 alone (and again in 2011). [2]

Part of the reason is that Germany is pursuing emerging technologies such as enhanced geothermal systems (EGS) because it does not have a strong hydrothermal resource [3], [4]. EGS involves fracturing hot dry rock deep in the earth to create channels through which liquids can be circulated and heated. This heated liquid is used to generate electricity at lower temperatures, and may use a process such as the Organic Rankine Cycle. Read more. *Source: NREL Renewable Energy Project Finance blog, 6/19/12*

Learn more about state renewables programs and energy analysis.

Grants, RFPs & Other Funding News

Federal Funding Resource Center

Van Ness Feldman has helped clients secure nearly $3 billion in federal funding for projects in recent years. The firm's lawyers and policy professionals are experienced in every step of the funding process, including developing and implementing strategies for securing funding from both Congress and federal agencies, assisting with funding applications, negotiating funding agreements, and managing ongoing reporting and compliance requirements.

Their Federal Funding Resource Center, which is updated daily, compiles active federal funding opportunity announcements in one place for ease of review. We also provide a Primer on the federal funding process. Browse individual federal funding opportunity announcements by subject using the links below. Read more. *Source: VanNess Feldman, 7/30/12*

Learn more about funding solicitations.